

National Catholic Theater Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

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TELLING THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS

That warm glow that permeates your entire group after your Christmas play...recall it. Why not share it this year with your community? Each city and town, each man and woman in America this year needs the inspiration that only the Christmas story of Love brings. No matter what the play or pageant, if it tells of the nativity, it heartens men.

The manger scenes that filled the store windows of Belgium and the Lowlands before the war we can bring to life on our city hall steps and on our village greens this year in America. Let's share our joy in Christmas with our neighbors!

SUBSTANTIAL AWARDS

To the author of the best full-length original play submitted in the Charles H. Sergel Play Contest will go \$1,000 in U. S. Savings Bonds. The prize was established in honor of Mr. Sergel, founder of the Dramatic Publishing Co., and is administered solely by the University of Chicago.

These are the conditions: 1) Only full length (acting time approximately 2 hrs.) plays hitherto unpublished and unproduced are eligible. 2) Judges reserve right to withhold prize if in their opinion no entry merits the prize. 3) Any U.S. citizen may enter contest. 4) Only one manuscript per contestant. 5) Agency production and publication rights remain with playwright. 6) Original typewritten copy of manuscript, securely bound, to be submitted; no illustrations, music etc., to accompany manuscript. 7) No critique of scripts given by judges; no correspondence entered into with contestants. 8) Manuscripts should be addressed to

Charles H. Sergel Play Contest
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois.

Contest management cannot assume liability for loss of scripts, but every precaution will be taken to return those accompanied by full return postage and self-addressed envelopes. 9) Contest closes December 31, 1943. Entries may be submitted prior to that date but must be postmarked not later than Dec. 31. No decision promised before March 1, 1944.

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Four awards in dramatic writing are offered by Dramatists' Alliance of Stanford University: Anderson Award for Verse Drama, \$100.; Etherege Award in Prose Comedy, \$100.; Benet Award for Short Plays, \$50.; Gray Award in Dramatic Criticism, \$25. Each prize also carries presentation during Dramatists' Assembly and recommendation to publishing houses and production groups.

Entries must be postmarked not later than March 15, 1944; entry fee \$1.; for additional fee of \$3. a brief criticism will be made by two competent judges. Further details: Miss Marjery Bailey, Proctor for Dramatists, Stanford University, California.

BLACKFRIARS' HIT

When every last blase critic stayed for the final curtain on opening night, the Blackfriars suspected approval of their "Career Angel." By 12:30, when they received a call from the judge for one of the largest night papers, saying he couldn't go to bed without telling them that they had given him one of the most pleasant evenings he had spent in the theater in a long time, they were sure of support in one quarter. But it wasn't until the round-up of opinion was received on November 19 that they knew they had a hit on their hands.

Since then the fifteen hour shift of the business manager has been sweetly, but distractingly busy. The demand for tickets is beyond capacity for the run planned to December 5 and four complete houses disposed of on the first day that an additional week's run was announced.

The New York Blackfriars have their own special Thanksgiving this year for "Career Angel"'s success has come at a critical time. With the stage unions barring use of Equity members, Blackfriars was faced with the difficulty of recruiting amateur actors or non-Equity players (16 men in this cast) who not only had the talent of professionals, but who would be responsible, as professionals are, for three weeks of nightly rehearsals and three weeks more of performances. That so many of the players in "Career Angel" have won special mention from the critics, although their experience has been so varied, is a tribute to Mr. Gurney's direction.

And the Conference is giving thanks too, for a play that with slight adaptation will be good for years when the men's colleges get back to dramatic production. In fact, Emmet Lavery, who saw the play on his recent visit to New York agrees with us that in an orphanage run by Sisters, "Career Angel" would still provide authentic humor and drama.

To Reverend Gerald Murray, the author, our congratulations on his real contribution to Catholic theater.

You will be hearing about "Career Angel" for some time, we are confident. Meanwhile, Mrs. M. L. Pritchett of 55 W. 42nd St., New York, holds the script as Father Murray's theatrical agent.

LENDING LIBRARY
THE CONFERENCE'S NEWEST SERVICE

No more Jack Horner acts for your play selection committee, for we've always thought that all the titles listed in a publisher's catalog are not plums. Nowadays if you're a Conference member and pay a deposit fee of \$1.00 you can read several plays and come to your decision more judiciously.

The play copy lending library now established by the Conference is a long stride forward. Father Carey wanted to start one when headquarters first moved to New York. Then we weren't equipped to handle the extra work it entailed but now, counting on cooperation of members in returning books promptly and following the procedure outlined in the adjoining column, we can tackle the job more confidently. Your Executive Board believes it is a service you will welcome, and the Service Bureau will do its best to make the project work for the benefit of all members.

It is important to the operation of the plan that we build up a sufficient supply of play copies. For the library we beg those idle copies of your past successes. Will you go through your shelves today and ship them to us at once? We are withholding a list of titles in the library until next month's Calendar in the hope that your donations will reach us in time for inclusion in this list.

According to the plan, we shall ship play copies under the book rate (except in the case of manuscripts, for which please see that subdivision under library rules) parcel post. If you wish a shipment made by special delivery or first class mail, you must so specify. Postage for shipment by us as well as for return of books must be borne by library members. To make your mailing of the return shipment easier, we shall enclose a gummed label bearing our address.

Let us help you to find the play best suited to your actors, your audience, and your season's schedule.

LIBRARY RULES

Deposit Fee: Upon payment of \$1 deposit fee, individual or group members of the Conference are entitled to library privileges.

Date Due: (Stamped on inside back cover) three weeks from date of our mailing.

Postage: Amount of postage paid by us on outgoing package to be refunded, in stamps, with the returned play copies. e.g.; If it costs us 6¢ to mail copies, the member would put 6¢ in stamps on his returning package and he would also enclose stamps amounting to 6¢.

Withdrawals: Limited to not more than 3 play copies at one time per member.

Fines: For late return of shipment, 25¢ (twenty-five cents) per week: for non-return of play copies, deposit fee or replacement, plus postage.

Request Purchases: If a play copy not in our library is requested by library depositor, it will be purchased for him; not more than one request-purchase will be made, however, for one depositor.

Manuscripts: May we remind library members that manuscripts must be sent first class mail or American Railway Express, not by parcel post or under book rate provisions. If requesting manuscripts from us, please take into consideration this additional expense. Please do not include in a return shipment to us any handwritten material.

Library: The January Production Calendar will include a list of play copies available to members, and additions to the library will be reported in succeeding bulletins. The Library urgently solicits donations of play copies; books need not be new but binding should be intact.

These rules may be amended as practice justifies. As soon as the supply of play copies is adequate, we shall extend the time limit on withdrawals.

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Strongly recommended by Samuel French as an amusing farce for high school production, "Streetcar in the Attic" is authored by a Conference member of long standing, Louis Feldhaus. 7 boys, 5 girls, one interior set are needed.

DECEMBER'S SCHEDULE

Hartford - Queene's Company of Saint Joseph College with its "Play for the Season of Christ's Nativity" - an annual performance in Latin based on the Liturgical Service of the Medieval Monastery and Cathedral.

New York - Carroll Club, December 23, annual presentation of the Nativity Play, Towneley Cycle.

- Rev. H. A. Pfeiffer, S. J., is doing his usual thorough job directing St. Francis Xavier's "Richard of Bordeaux." The ten scenes seem to be no problem to Father Pfeiffer or his technical assistant. Production dates: December 3 and 4.

Pittsburgh - Catholic Theatre Guild's radio group presenting a series of dramatic programs "Way of Life" over Station WCAE Saturday evenings in Advent.

Washington - Trinity College Dramatic Group, in Notre Dame Auditorium on December 5, "The Women Have Their Way" the Granville-Barker translation of the Spanish play by Serafin and Joaquin Alvarez. Special production of their Christmas play for Catholic orphans on December 19.

- Catholic University Theatre December 8 through 14, "Rip Van Winkle", the second of its Season Americana offerings.

Xavier, Kansas - The Dramarians, Saint Mary College, produces "Nine Girls".

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The Children's Stage of Detroit tallied three sell-out performances of "Peek's Bad Boy," including an extra morning showing on November 13.

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Clarke College, Dubuque, has been concentrating on radio drama this term. In addition to bi-monthly plays, WKBB also carries their weekly Woman's World program.

EVERYMAN WITH A CHORUS Sacred Heart Academy of Springfield, Illinois, produced "Everyman" last spring with Strength, Discretion, Beauty Five Wits, et al., presented in choral passages. And the audience liked it.

Sister Mary Isabelle, O.P., director, also writes us that Olive Price's 3-act "Family Tree" is a new all-girl play that merits enthusiasm. "Angelica, Inc." is another play for girls alone, by the same author.

A WARTIME MANUAL

National Thespian Dramatic Honor Society has concentrated on the educational theater's role in the war effort.

In addition to the regular magazine published for members - an all over view of U.S. High School theaters - National Thespian has released a wartime manual for high school dramatic directors together with a list of plays and material suitable for patriotic programs. Both are furnished gratis to groups affiliated with National Thespian.

RECEIVED, FROM DETROIT

Blue prints of floor plans for their recent "The Willow and I" and "The More the Merrier" productions are the latest donations from Catholic Theater of Detroit. We hope these are the start of a growing library of construction helps to Conference members. They are for your use.

NTC ANNUAL MEETING

As the Production Calendar goes into print the National Theatre Conference is holding its annual meeting in New York. The first day's conferences introduced problems of economic restrictions on the commercial theater ("The Theater Has Swallowed a Tapeworm"), and of planning with Armed Forces Institute for training and content courses in theater for soldiers abroad to begin the day after shooting stops.

Hallie Flanagan Davis, in an interesting parenthesis, mentioned the Christmas Festival at Smith College last year in which 2000 students and 1000 Waves took part; in the pattern of the old Morality Plays the participating departmental units were labelled Station 1, Station 2, etc.

Highlights of Friday's luncheon were Maxwell Anderson's reading of notes made in Africa and Howard Lindsay's discussion of the local theater manager's opposition to early amateur releases in "road" towns.

